

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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CROOKS TO SEEK PUBLIC INPUT ON TIME ZONE QUESTION IN 2006

INDIANAPOLIS – Legislation filed today by State Rep. Dave Crooks (D-Washington) will give Hoosiers the chance they want to decide whether Indiana will be in the Central or Eastern Time Zone.

The proposal, eligible for consideration in the 2006 session of the Indiana General Assembly, calls for a public referendum in the 2006 general election that would enable voters to determine whether most of Indiana should observe Central Time throughout the year. This change would not impact five counties along the Ohio River in Southern Indiana: Clark, Dearborn, Floyd, Harrison and Ohio.

"If the voters approve the public question, the governor would be required to petition the U.S. Department of Transportation to initiate proceedings to change the time zone boundary, so that most of Indiana would be on Central Time," Crooks said.

Crooks chose to pursue a referendum after hearing from people throughout Indiana who were upset over the way the state and federal governments have handled requests from counties around the state seeking to change to Central Time.

"From the hundreds of letters, e-mails and telephone calls I have received, there is a common thread in the public's dissatisfaction," Crooks noted. "They simply cannot believe that state and federal officials are unwilling to discuss the importance of determining if Indiana should remain on Eastern Time or move into the Central Time Zone.

"From the level of debate that took place in the time zone hearing conducted in Jasper, it is apparent that changing time zones is a public policy issue that must be discussed right now," he continued. "Through my legislation, I hope to give the people of Indiana a chance to make their feelings known, once and for all."

Crooks indicated he was willing to work with Gov. Mitch Daniels and leaders in both the Indiana House and Senate on a final version of the time zone bill.

"But I want everyone to know that this debate should be driven by the people of Indiana, rather than the special interests of this state," Crooks said. "After all, this change will impact the everyday lives of millions of people who live and work in Indiana, the Crossroads of America. We want to make sure we are doing what is best for them, not some out-of-state business."

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This news release can be accessed on the Internet at www.IN.gov/H63